



## Marcus Buell: A Story of Success

**M**arcus Buell enrolled in CFL Workers Assistance Committee's dislocated worker program after being laid off from the University of Chicago where he worked for more than 15 years as a housekeeper. Marcus participated in several programs offered through CFL Workers Assistance Committee including: Basic Skills Course, Introduction to Healthcare, and the Transitional Jobs Project.

"When I was laid off, I was devastated. I found out about the CFL Workers Assistance Committee when I attended an employment workshop that my union, International Brotherhood of Teamsters Local 743, was sponsoring," said Buell.

### A Customer-centered Approach

For a brief time, Buell lost contact with Judy Lai, his CFL Workers Assistance Committee case manager. But Lai was determined to re-connect with Buell.

"After working with Marcus, I had a sense that he might be facing some temporary obstacles," said Lai. "I thought he needed some additional structure so I suggested he come to the CFL Workers Assistance Committee office a few days a week to start looking for a job," she said.

"That turned out to be the most important thing that I could've done," said Buell." During his visits, Buell spoke with Lai, worked on his resume and cover letter and learned interview techniques. He also participated in the Transitional Jobs Project (TJP), which provides a weekly stipend for participants who volunteer at least 15 hours per week at a local nonprofit organization. Through TJP, Buell volunteered at the Lincoln Park Zoo for five months. Because of the weekly office visits and volunteer experience, Buell said his "self esteem began to get better and better."

Recently, Buell landed a job as a Housekeeping Specialist Assistant at Northwestern Memorial Hospital where he earns \$11.96 per hour. But he's not done yet.

"My plans are to work in my current position until I see the opportunity for advancement," said Buell. "**But I've got my foot in the door**, thanks to the CFL Workers Assistance Committee. They are really good at what they do and I know that I couldn't have done it without them," said Buell.

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## Training Grant Improves Workplace Safety

In partnership with City Colleges of Chicago's Workforce Institute, the CFL Workers Assistance Committee helped Euro Marble & Granite, Inc. train its workforce and pursue industry accreditation. Specifically, the CFL Workers Assistance Committee used Workforce Investment Act incumbent worker training funds to provide Euro Marble with a grant to train and certify 12 employees in OSHA safety standards and forklift operation.

John Bradarich, CFL Workers Assistance Committee's business services manager, guided Euro Marble through the incumbent worker training process.

"Working with Euro Marble and our partners, we helped to ensure that the company received a customized training program to meet its needs," said Bradarich.

Euro Marble, a small, family-owned company based in Schiller Park, Ill., fabricates custom-made stone countertops for residential buildings. While the company weathered the housing market crash, like many other businesses, it had to make tough decisions about how to invest its resources. In a tough economy, employee training becomes even more important to helping a company stay competitive but it's often cut because of limited resources.

"While safety is our #1 priority, today's economic situation would have required us to postpone much-needed training and certification in OSHA and forklift

operation," said Wojtek Rajch, president, Euro Marble & Granite. "This invaluable training has helped us keep safety a top priority."

The CFL Workers Assistance Committee grant allowed the Workforce Institute to develop and deliver a 10-hour OSHA safety course and 6-hour forklift operation course for Euro Marble employees. Now, all 12 employees are certified in one or both of the training areas. Euro Marble matched the grant amount by paying wages and benefits to the employees during training, including the Saturday OSHA course.

Euro Marble employees said the training demonstrated the company's commitment to ensuring safety in the workplace. And, the training positioned some employees for possible promotions, which may result in the opening of entry-level positions. The safety training also serves as one step in Euro Marble's pursuit of accreditation from the Marble Institute of America.

John Bradarich continues to work with Euro Marble to address additional training needs in advanced CNC machine operation, laser measurement and AutoCAD.

"The CFL Workers Assistance Committee exceeded our expectations, said Mr. Rajch. "They made the grant process simple. We are excited about working with it on future projects."

*John Bradarich (right) talks with Wojtek Rajch about creating a worker training program.*



# CFL Workers Assistance Committee Launches New Web Site, Logo

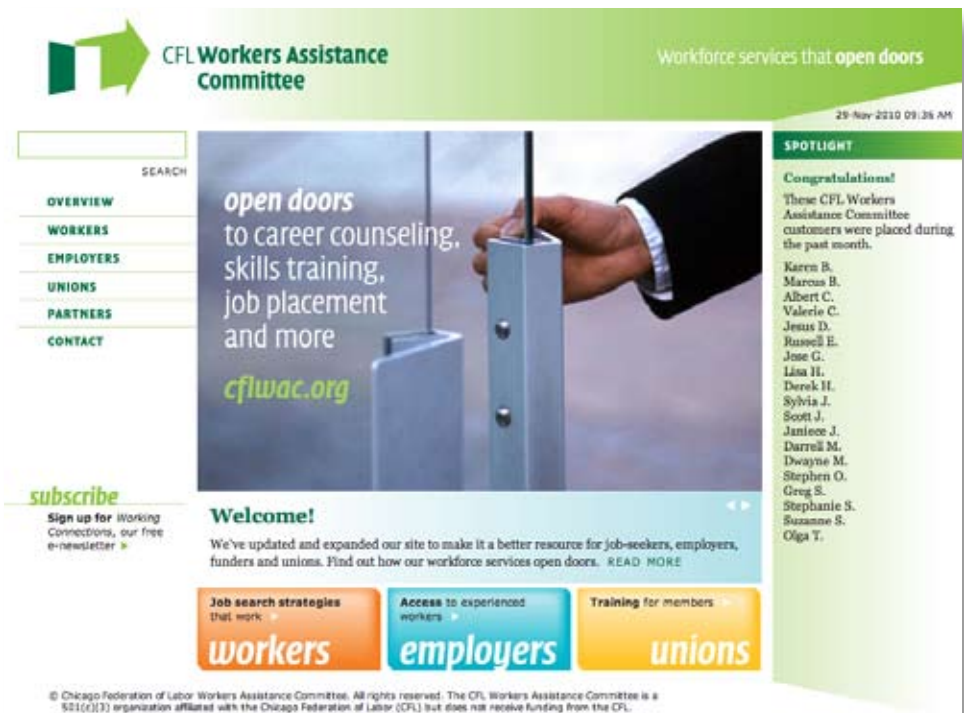
Our new web site, [www.cflwac.org](http://www.cflwac.org) offers job seekers, employers and unions the resources and information they need to be successful.

“When we began re-thinking our site, we started with the needs of our customers (job seekers, employers and unions) in mind,” said Mary Gallagher, executive director, CFL Workers Assistance Committee. “The new [cflwac.org](http://www.cflwac.org) is focused on each of these audiences, allowing them to navigate easily throughout the site to access the information they need,” she said.

We provide workforce services that open doors because we understand the needs of job seekers and employers.

- ▶ Where can I develop the new skills I need to get a job?
- ▶ How can my company locate training dollars to upgrade the skills of our employees and help us stay competitive?
- ▶ Where can my company find experienced and qualified workers?

You'll find answers to these and many other workforce questions at the Chicago Federation of Labor Workers Assistance Committee's new web site: [www.cflwac.org](http://www.cflwac.org).



As active partners in workforce development, we identify issues, develop solutions and share best practices through what we learn from job seekers and employers. We advocate for strengthening worker training and creating long lasting relationships with employers.

Our new logo captures what we do best...***we provide workforce services that open doors.*** Discover how we can help you at [www.cflwac.org](http://www.cflwac.org).

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The CFL Workers Assistance Committee is a unique 501(c)(3) organization developed, sponsored and endorsed by the Chicago Federation of Labor. Founded in 1994, our mission is to develop and enhance the skills of Chicago area workers to meet the needs of area employers and vitalize the local economy.